

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-4, 6, and 8-28 are presently active in this case. The present Amendment amends Claims 1-3, 8-10, 12, 15-17, 19, 22-24 and 26, and adds new Claims 29-34 without introducing any new matter; and cancels Claims 5 and 7 without prejudice or disclaimer.

The outstanding final Office Action rejected Claims 1-28 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Sato (U.S. Patent No. 5,276,875) in view of Fantozzi (U.S. Patent No. 3,813,157). The November 2, 2005 Advisory Action maintained the rejection of Claims 1-28.

To clarify the claimed invention, independent Claim 1 is amended to recite “wherein a warm-up of said main body is started when the control section of the main body confirms a completion of the homing operation of the scanner.” This feature finds non-limiting support in Applicant’s specification as originally filed, for example from page 7, line 25 to page 8, line 14, and in corresponding Figure 5, step S14. The remaining independent Claims 2-3, 8-10, 12, 15-17, 19, 22-24, and 26 are amended to recite the same feature in the context of the respective claims.

In response to the rejection of Claims 1-28 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a), Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of this rejection and traverses the rejection, as discussed next.

Briefly recapitulating, amended Claim 1 relates to an image processing apparatus, including a scanner with a direct control section configured to control a scanning operation of the scanner so as to input image information from an original document; and a main body configured to process the image information, and including a control section configured to perform an initializing process for the main body, wherein a homing operation of the scanner

is performed by the direct control section independently of the initializing process of the control section of the main body, when power is supplied to the image processing apparatus or when the image processing apparatus is returned from a shutdown state, and wherein a warm-up of the main body is started when a ***control section of the main body confirms a completion of the homing operation of the scanner.*** Amended independent Claims 2-3, 5, 15-17 and 19 recite similar features in the context of image processing apparatuses, independent Claims 8-10 and 12 recite similar features in the context of a method for initializing an image processing apparatus, and independent Claims 22-24 and 26 recite similar features in the context of a computer program product for initializing an image processing apparatus.

As explained in Applicant's Specification at page 3, lines 1-17 with corresponding Figures 2 and 5, Applicant's invention improves upon background image processing apparatuses, since a method and a computer program product can perform the initialization process of the scanner in a short time period. In particular, the time required for the initialization process of the image processing apparatus can be reduced after the apparatus is turned on or after the apparatus returns to operation from a shutdown state.

A non-limiting embodiment disclosed in the Specification is next explained. The image processing apparatus performs a homing operation of the scanner by the control section of the scanner in parallel with initializing processes of the main body.¹ Subsequently, the control section confirms if the homing operation of the scanner was performed normally.² If the homing operation of the scanner was performed normally, the scanner is automatically adjusted and the main body is warmed up.³

Turning now to the applied references, Satoh discloses a state control system for a copying machine to work in a sequence of processing operations divided into a plurality of

¹ See Applicant's Figure 5, steps 12 and 13.

² See Applicant's Figure 5, step 14.

³ See Applicant's Figure 5, steps 15 and 16.

states, wherein a position for starting a document reading can be determined by driving the imaging unit for one time in advance to detect the position of the register and the home position.⁴ Satoh, however, fails to teach or suggest the claimed image processing apparatus. In particular, and as acknowledged in the outstanding Office Action, Satoh fails to teach or suggest that the warm-up of the main body is started when a completion of the homing operation of the scanner is confirmed,⁵ as claimed.

The outstanding Office Action rejects Claims 1-28 based on the proposition that Fantozzi discloses the above feature,⁶ and that it would have been obvious to modify Satoh by importing this feature from Fantozzi to arrive at the claimed invention. Since independent Claim 1 is amended to further clarify the feature regarding the completion of the homing operation, Applicant believes that the rejection of Claims 1-28 is now moot, because Fantozzi fails to disclose the feature regarding that the warm-up of the main body is started *when a control section of the main body confirms a completion of the homing operation* of the scanner, as next discussed.

The outstanding Office Action indicates that “warm-up of said main body is started when a completion of the homing operation of the scanner is confirmed” is disclosed in Fantozzi. As further pointed out by the November 2, 2005 Advisory Action, Fantozzi discloses “[a]fter the print button is pressed, at time t_0 , (Fig. 8C) and after a duration of warm up time Δ_t , a scan pulse S1 is generated by the actuation of the scan switch 33 as the scanning means 13 begins to drive away from its rest position.”⁷ In other words, according to Fantozzi’s teachings, the homing operation of the scanner is always performed when a warm up time Δ_t elapsed. Therefore, Fantozzi fails to teach or suggest the starting of a warm-up of the main body, when a control section of the main body confirms a completion of the homing

⁴ See Satoh in the Abstract, and at column 11, lines 5-15, and in Figure 5(b).

⁵ See outstanding Office Action at page 3, lines 11-12.

⁶ See outstanding Office Action at page 3, lines 13-14.

⁷ See Fantozzi at column 9, lines 17-32.

operation. Accordingly, starting scanning and driving a scanner away from its rest position after a duration Δt , as taught by Fantozzi, *is not* starting a warm-up of said main body when the control section of the main body confirms a completion of the homing operation of the scanner, as recited in Claim 1. Therefore, even if the combination of Satoh and Fantozzi is assumed to be proper, the combination fails to teach every element of the claimed invention. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully traverses, and requests reconsideration of, this rejection based on these patents.⁸

Independent Claims 2-3, 8-10, 12, 15-17, 19, 22-24, and 26 recite limitations analogous to the limitations recited in independent Claim 1. Moreover, Claims 2-3, 8-10, 12, 15-17, 19, 22-24, and 26 have been amended in a manner analogous to the amendment to Claim 1. Accordingly, for the reasons stated above for the patentability of Claim 1, Applicant respectfully submits that the rejections of Claims 2-3, 8-10, 12, 15-17, 19, 22-24, and 26, and all associated dependent claims, are also believed to be overcome in view of the arguments regarding independent Claim 1.

To vary the scope of protection recited in the claims, new Claims 29-34 are added. New Claims 29-31 depend upon Claims 1-3, respectively, and recite features regarding abnormal homing operation.⁹ New Claims 32-34 depend upon Claims 1-3, respectively, and recite features regarding the control section of the main body supplying data to the direct control section of the scanner to enable automatic adjustment.¹⁰ Applicant respectfully submits that none of the reference Satoh and Fantozzi, taken individually or in combination, teach or suggest the features of new dependent Claims 29-34.

⁸ See MPEP 2142 stating, as one of the three "basic criteria [that] must be met" in order to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, that "the prior art reference (or references when combined) must teach or suggest all the claim limitations," (emphasis added). See also MPEP 2143.03: "All words in a claim must be considered in judging the patentability of that claim against the prior art."

⁹ Finds non-limiting support in the disclosure as originally filed, for example at page 10, lines 1-6.

¹⁰ Idem, for example at page 10, lines 7-13.

Applicant also respectfully traverses the obviousness-type rejection based on Satoh and Fantozzi because there is insufficient evidence for a motivation to modify Satoh by incorporating Fantozzi's homing switch 33 for timing synchronization, for the following reasons.¹¹

It is not clear from the record how the teaching of Fantozzi's homing switch 33 for the scanning means 13 could be incorporated into Satoh. Satoh's copying machine includes an image input terminal IIT 32 with an imaging unit 37 for scanning the documents and an image output terminal IOT 34 with a scanner 40 to provide a photosensitive image to the belt 41.¹² Therefore, Satoh has two different types of scanning units, one for image input, and one for image output. Fantozzi, however, only uses one scanning device 13 to scan the document 11 and also to provide a photosensitive image to the drum 1,¹³ thereby using analog signals to copy the document. Since in Fantozzi image input scanning and output scanning is not done by two different units with a digital data transmission, the homing switch 33 is required to synchronize the entire process of copying document. Satoh does not need such a feature, since these processes are separated into IIT 32 and IOT 34 and are performed with a digital control circuit.¹⁴

Further, it is not clear from the references of record how the teachings of Fantozzi's homing switch 33 could be incorporated into Satoh's IIT 32 or IOT 34. Such modification would require a substantial reconstruction or redesign of the elements of Satoh, and would

¹¹ See MPEP 2143.01 stating "[o]bviousness can only be established by combining or modifying the teaching of the prior art to produce the claimed invention where there is some teaching, suggestion, or motivation to do so found either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art," (citations omitted). See also MPEP 2144.08 III stating that "[e]xplicit findings on motivation or suggestion to select the claimed invention should also be articulated in order to support a 35 U.S.C. 103 ground of rejection. . . . Conclusory statements of similarity or motivation, without any articulated rational or evidentiary support, do not constitute sufficient factual findings."

¹² See Satoh from column 4, line 34 to column 5, line 33 and in corresponding Figure 2.

¹³ See Fantozzi at column 3, lines 19-64 and in corresponding Figure 2.

¹⁴ See Satoh in Figure 3.

change the basic principle of operation of Satoh. There is no evidence that a person of ordinary skill in the art would be motivated to perform such changes and redesign.¹⁵

In rejecting a claim under 35 U.S.C. §103(a), the U.S.P.T.O. must support its rejection by "substantial evidence" within the record,¹⁶ and by "clear and particular" evidence¹⁷ of a suggestion, teaching, or motivation to combine the teachings of different references. As discussed above, there is no substantial evidence, nor clear and particular evidence, within the record of motivation for modifying Satoh by incorporating Fantozzi's homing switch. Without such motivation and absent improper hindsight reconstruction,¹⁸ a person of ordinary skill in the art would not be motivated to perform the proposed modification, and Claims 1-28 are believed to be non-obvious and patentable over the applied references.

Consequently, in view of the present request for reconsideration, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application, and the present application is believed to be in condition for formal Allowance. A Notice of Allowance for Claims 1-34 is earnestly solicited.

¹⁵ See In re Ratti, 270 F.2d 810, 813, 123 USPQ 349, 352 (reversing an obviousness rejection where the "suggested combination of references would require a substantial reconstruction and redesign of the elements shown in [the primary reference] as well as a change in the basic principle under which the [primary reference] construction was designed to operate.")

¹⁶ See In re Gartside, 203 F.3d 1305, 53 USPQ2d 1769 (Fed. Cir. 2000) (holding that, consistent with the Administrative Procedure Act at 5 USC 706(e), the CAFC reviews the Board's decisions based on factfindings, such as 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejections, using the 'substantial evidence' standard because these decisions are confined to the factual record compiled by the Board.)

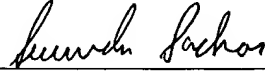
¹⁷ See In re Dembiczak, 175 F.3d 994, 999, 50 USPQ2d 1614, 1617 (Fed. Cir. 1999) ("We have noted that evidence of a suggestion, teaching, or motivation to combine may flow from the prior art references themselves, the knowledge of one of ordinary skill in the art, or, in some cases, from the nature of the problem to be solved, although 'the suggestion more often comes from the teachings of the pertinent references.' The range of sources available, however, does not diminish the requirement for actual evidence. That is, the showing must be clear and particular." (emphasis added).

¹⁸ See MPEP 2141, stating, as one of the tenets of patent law applying to 35 USC 103, that "[t]he references must be viewed without the benefit of impermissible hindsight vision afforded by the claimed invention."

Should the Examiner deem that any further action is necessary to place this application in even better form for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact Applicant's undersigned representative at the below listed telephone number.

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